



## COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value

### DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

#### CLASS SPECIFICATION

#### CLASSIFIED

**MEDICAL EXAMINER INVESTIGATOR I**

**Class No. 005741**

**MEDICAL EXAMINER INVESTIGATOR II**

**Class No. 005740**

**MEDICAL EXAMINER INVESTIGATOR III**

**Class No. 005742**

#### ■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

To conduct investigations into the circumstances of death in cases reported to the Medical Examiner's Office.

#### ■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Positions in these classes are sworn peace officers allocated to the Medical Examiner's Office. Medical Examiner Investigators are responsible for conducting investigations regarding the mode of death (e.g., suicide, homicide, or natural causes). The investigative work performed is distinguished from that of other law enforcement officials or medical personnel, which focus on criminal evidence, violations of law, or the biological cause of death.

##### Medical Examiner Investigator I:

This is the entry-level class in the Medical Examiner Investigator series. Incumbents work under immediate supervision and are expected to progressively perform investigative work in a more independent manner.

##### Medical Examiner Investigator II:

This is the journey-level class in the Medical Examiner Investigator series. Under general supervision, incumbents work independently and perform the more complex investigations. This class differs from the next higher class, Medical Examiner Investigator III, in that the latter works in a lead capacity, directing the work activities and assisting in the training and evaluation of Medical Examiner Investigators.

##### Medical Examiner Investigator III:

This is the lead-worker class in the Medical Examiner Investigator class series. Under general direction, incumbents provide technical assistance and training to Medical Examiner Investigators, and may conduct the most complex investigations. Incumbents in this class serve as lead workers responsible for supervision of investigative staff in the absence of the Supervising Medical Examiner Investigator. This class differs from the next higher class, Supervising Medical Examiner Investigator, in that the latter is a first line supervisor responsible for the Investigations Division of the Medical Examiner's Office and the overall supervision and evaluation of all medical examiner investigators.

#### ■ FUNCTIONS

**The examples of functions listed in the class specifications are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the classes. Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such duties are a logical assignment for the position.**

The following apply to all classes:

##### Essential Functions:

1. Inquires into the manner, circumstances, and mode of any violent, traumatic, or unusual deaths occurring within the geographic boundaries of the County of San Diego.
2. Conducts visual inspection of the deceased and makes written notes of the bodies' condition (i.e., degree of rigor mortis, lividity, visual bruises or lacerations, temperature, purge, clothing, position).
3. Interviews and solicits statements from relatives and persons last in attendance or present at the time of death.
4. Searches for and impounds physical evidence which may have contributed to the death (i.e., drugs, weapons, suicide notes).
5. Works closely with law enforcement officials to identify the unknown dead.

6. Locates and notifies next of kin.
7. Secures the decedent's property.
8. Documents information gathered during the field investigation and utilizes toxicology reports, autopsy reports and decedents medical history in order to write a report of all deaths investigated for the Medical Examiner's case files.
9. Prepares written authorizations needed for the legal disposition of the decedent's body and property.
10. Prepares preliminary reports for the Public Administrator.
11. Prepares detailed descriptions of the unknown dead.
12. Answers inquiries regarding information obtained during field investigations and information contained in the Medical Examiner's case files.
13. Cooperates with other government officials.
14. Provides courteous, high quality service to members of the public by personally responding to requests for service or appropriate referral.

Non-Essential Function:

1. Acts as community liaison giving orientations and conducting tours of the Medical Examiner's facilities.

#### Medical Examiner Investigator III:

Essential Functions:

All the functions listed above and

1. Trains, supervises, and evaluates subordinates regarding case investigations.
2. Handles complex investigations and critical consultation issues.
3. Performs quality assurance work and initiates corrective action when errors are discovered.
4. Coordinates work to ensure that deadlines are met.

### **■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

Knowledge of:

The following apply to all classes:

- Methods of collecting and preserving evidence.
- Post-mortem changes to establish mode of death.
- Techniques of interviewing and investigation.
- Department and County policies and procedures.
- Anatomy, Physiology, and Toxicology.
- Medical terminology and their standard abbreviations.
- Pharmacology, therapeutic dosages, length of drug action, and contradictions.
- Applicable State and local laws pertaining to Medical Examiner and Coroner investigations.
- Telephone, office, and online etiquette.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.

Medical Examiner Investigator III (in addition to the above):

- Theories and techniques of supervision and/or project management.

Skills and Abilities to:

The following apply to all classes:

- Effectively maintain interpersonal and public relations.
- Effectively communicate in both oral and written English.
- Read and follow street maps.
- Research and analyze data or information.

- Communicate effectively with a variety of individuals representing diverse cultures and backgrounds and function calmly in stressful situations, which require a high degree of sensitivity, tact and diplomacy.
- Treat County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Assess the customer's immediate needs and ensure customer's receipt of needed services through personal service or referral.
- Provide prompt, efficient and responsive service.
- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

## ■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

### Medical Examiner Investigator I:

1. One (1) year paid experience as a full-time Medical Examiner Investigator, Deputy Coroner, Forensic Autopsy Assistant, Forensic Embalmer or Forensic Technician in a Coroner or Medical Examiner's facility; OR,
2. Two (2) years paid experience as a full-time Peace Officer (as defined in California Penal Code Sections 830 or 832), Paramedic, Registered Nurse, or served in a medical capacity dealing with patient care, within a medical facility.
3. Possession of an associate degree or completion of 60 semester units from an accredited college. Coursework must have included 15 semester units in medical terminology, anatomy, biology, chemistry, investigations, forensics, or physiology.

### Medical Examiner Investigator II:

1. Two (2) years of experience conducting medico-legal investigations, one (1) year of which must be the equivalent of the Medical Examiner Investigator I level as defined above; OR,
2. One (1) year of experience conducting medico-legal investigations at the equivalent of the Medical Examiner Investigator I level as defined above, AND two (2) years of supervisory law enforcement experience.

### Medical Examiner Investigator III:

1. Three (3) years of experience conducting medico-legal investigations, two (2) years of which must be the equivalent of the Medical Examiner Investigator II level as defined above; OR,
2. Two (2) years of experience conducting medico-legal investigations, one (1) year of which must be the equivalent of the Medical Examiner Investigator II level as defined above, AND two (2) years of supervisory law enforcement experience.

## ■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

**The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classifications. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.**

Must be able to 1) traverse rough terrain to reach scene of death, 2) lift 50 pounds, and 3) enter and egress various forms of transportation (e.g., helicopters).

Frequent: repetitive use of hands to operate computers, printers and copiers. Occasional: walking, standing, bending and twisting of neck, bending and twisting of waist, squatting, simple grasping, reaching above and below shoulder level, and lifting and carrying of files weighing up to 10 pounds.

## ■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

### License

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

### Certification/Registration

Must meet State of California minimum standards (Government Code Sect. 1031) for peace officers at time of appointment.

#### Working Conditions

Subject to standby, callback and shift work. Office environment; exposure to computer screens.

#### Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Felony convictions will be disqualifying. Misdemeanor convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a thorough background investigation which may include a psychological, polygraph or other examination or test.

#### Probationary Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in these classes shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

**New: August 30, 1974 (Class Nos. 005741 & 005740)**  
**Retitled: November 16, 1990 (From: Deputy Coroner I & II)**  
**New: October 23, 1998 (Class No. 005742)**  
**Revised: September 30, 1999**  
**Reviewed: Spring 2003**  
**Revised: August 18, 2004**

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